



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2016

No. 61

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, Your works are great and marvelous. We praise You for the gift of this day and rededicate ourselves to serve our Nation in a way that honors You.

Lord, we confess that too often we bring You the leftovers of our time, talents, and trust, but empower us to offer You nothing less than our best.

Bless our Senators. Give them the compassion, courage, and wisdom that our times demand. Use them to touch our Nation and world in a way that will enable Your will to be done. Dwell in us all and make us productive for the betterment of humanity.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, under a new majority the Senate is getting back to work, and progress is being made on behalf of the American people. We saw another example of that yesterday when we passed the most pro-passenger, pro-security FAA reauthorization in years.

It is the product of dedicated work from Senator THUNE, Senator AYOTTE, and their ranking member counterparts, Senators NELSON and CANTWELL. These Senators ensured that Republicans and Democrats both had a say on this bill, and we ultimately arrived at balanced legislation that passed by a very strong bipartisan majority.

It takes important strides to bolster national security against the threat of terrorism, it contains provisions to help frustrated passengers, and it won't levy a nickel in new taxes or fees on passengers or impose the kind of over-regulation that can take away their choice or threaten service.

As the Washington Post reminded us, this is "the second major transportation bill approved by the Senate within five months."

So whether it is providing long-term solutions for highway funding, permanent tax relief for families and small businesses, or commonsense reforms for airline passengers and airport security, this much is clear: The Republican-led Senate is working to address issues that affect our constituents on a daily basis.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, passing the FAA reauthorization bill isn't the only legislative milestone we will mark this week. Today we will pass, as the New York Times put it, "the first major energy bill to come to the Senate floor since the Bush administration," the passage of which, as the paper has also noted, would represent a significant step forward for the Nation's energy policy.

It has been nearly a decade since the Senate last debated major energy legislation and much has changed in that time. That is why Senator MURKOWSKI, the Energy Committee chair, and Senator CANTWELL, the ranking member, worked for the past year to move broad

bipartisan energy legislation, the Energy Policy Modernization Act.

Like the FAA reauthorization bill I mentioned earlier, this bill won't raise taxes on American families, but it can help them by making energy more affordable and more abundant, by building on technological advances and bolstering national security, and by growing the economy and furthering innovation. In short, the bill before us takes a comprehensive approach to bring America's energy policies in line with the kind of challenges and opportunities we now face.

The bill managers worked ceaselessly to see this bill through to final passage. Now, following the passage of the most pro-passenger, pro-security FAA reauthorization in years, the Republican-led Senate will today pass the first major Energy bill in nearly a decade. It is broad, it is bipartisan, and it is just the kind of legislation we are seeing a lot of in a Republican-led Senate that continues to show what is possible with good ideas and good old hard work.

THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Finally, Mr. President, on the topic of hard work. The reason the Republican-led Senate has been able to pass so much good legislation over the past year is because we resolved to put this Chamber back to work.

That started with the committees. We have seen what is possible in the Commerce Committee; just look at the FAA bill. We have seen what is possible in the Energy Committee; just look at the Energy bill. But we are also seeing what is possible in many other committees, such as Appropriations.

Last year, the committee passed all 12 of the bills that fund the government. Passing all of those bills through committee used to be fairly routine, yet it hadn't happened in years by the time the new majority took over. We

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S2205